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**NEGOTIATING POSITION  
ON CHAPTER 18  
EDUCATION VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND YOUTH**

***OVERALL POSITION***

The Republic of Bulgaria accepts and will implement in full the *acquis* in the field of Education, Vocational Training and Youth.

As a working hypothesis, the Bulgarian Government considers that Bulgaria will become a member of the EU on 01.01.2007.

No derogations or transitional periods in this area will be requested.

***ACQUIS ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION***

The Bulgarian legislation on education is in line with Directive 77/486/EEC on the education of the children of migrant workers. Additional courses in mother tongue, culture and Bulgarian language are provided for in the National Education Act and in the Level of Schooling, General Educational Minimum and Curriculum Act. For large groups of children of migrant workers, permanent residents, and Bulgarian citizens, whose mother tongue is other than Bulgarian, such courses are carried out in schools or classes, set up especially for this purpose.

The Vocational Education and Training Act is in line with the *acquis*. It introduces a mobile and adaptable vocational education and training system that meets the requirements of the labour market and forms an integral part of the socio-economic development policy.

The Higher Education Act of the Republic of Bulgaria corresponds to the main requirements on quality and access to higher education.

The Republic of Bulgaria has brought the ongoing National educational reform in full compliance with Art. 149 and Art. 150 of the Amsterdam Treaty.

All institutional infrastructures, necessary for the implementation of EU legislation in the area of Education and Training, are in place and will be functioning in full compliance with the *acquis* by the date of the accession of Bulgaria to the EU.

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The Bulgarian government proposes the negotiations on this chapter to be provisionally closed on the basis of the existing *acquis*.

Should new elements of the *acquis* make it necessary, Bulgaria recognizes the possibility of opening supplementary negotiations before the end of the Intergovernmental conference.